

## May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Proclamation

WHEREAS, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month is observed during the month of May to recognize the contributions and influence of AAPI persons as part of the whole history, culture, and achievements of the United States;

WHEREAS, AAPI Heritage in the United States was celebrated at least as early as 1978 and was made into a month-long event in 1992;

WHEREAS, Lexington is proud to be home to a large AAPI population that contributes greatly to the prosperity and enrichment of our community;

WHEREAS, during AAPI Heritage Month, we acknowledge AAPI persons have lived and worked in the United States for more than 200 years, and have made significant contributions to all facets of the United States such as economy, culture, education, politics, arts, law enforcement, military, literature, science, and technological developments despite institutional and systemic injustices designed to silence and cover up these achievements and contributions;

WHEREAS, during AAPI Heritage Month, we acknowledge the additional determination, hard work, and perseverance AAPI persons must put forth to be heard and seen and that these additional efforts are a result of inequitable institutional and systemic injustices;

WHEREAS, despite these contributions and leadership, the role of AAPI persons in the U.S. has been consistently overlooked and undervalued in education including areas such as math, science, literature, and American history;

WHEREAS, we celebrate the achievements and contributions of AAPI persons that enrich our history, society, and culture, we must also acknowledge a darker aspect of the AAPI experience in America, which includes painful stereotypes, structural discrimination, injustices, and periods of hate and violence. These actions come at the cost of the mental health of the AAPI community and distorts the larger community's ability to recognize the humanity in us all.

WHEREAS, the AAPI communities are among the fastest growing populations in Lexington;

WHEREAS, AAPI communities in Lexington have shared their rich culture and traditions while representing their communities through public service and advocacy; and

WHEREAS, diversity represents one of our greatest strengths, and by recognizing the contributions and accomplishments of AAPI persons, our town will put our values of inclusion into practice to build a brighter future for all of our residents;

WHEREAS, Lexington is committed to providing comprehensive support to ensure that Lexington is equitable and welcoming to all people;

WHEREAS, each of us has a personal responsibility to prevent the spread of misinformation, stereotypes, condemn violent acts in any form, support all fellow community members, and reject stigma, hate, and bias in all its forms; and

WHEREAS, Lexington is proud to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month, and commemorate the essential contributions, sacrifices, and accomplishments that the AAPI communities have made;

NOW THEREFORE: The Town of Lexington, MA, Human Rights Committee does hereby proclaim the month of May to be annually recognized as AAPI Heritage Month; we call this observance to the attention of all our residents and boards and encourage other boards to adopt the same recognition.

The Town of Lexington, Human Rights Committee